jr latrobe

the anarchist

Volume 1 Number 4

Leave Uranium In The Ground!

LEAVE URANIUM IN THE GROUND AND BURY THE ALP WITH IT!

It is breathtaking to see the nerve of various ALP politicians from Prime Minister Keating down as well as various prominent union figures as they bleat about the evils of French and Chinese nuclear testing. The ultimate irony came when the French threatened to stop buying Australian uranium if the bleating didn't stop!

It was the ALP and the ACTU who sold out the anti-uranium movement in the early 80's, leaving it gutted and directionless. The emphasis moved away from a total opposition to the mining and export of uranium in this country to mass demonstrations against the perceived threat of a nuclear holocaust.

Fortunately the Cold War has ended without the nuclear Armageddon that was feared. Instead it has left in its wake a series of limited and conventional wars such as in the Balkans, Chechnya, etc. The threat of nuclear conflict remains real, with countries such as Iraq and Iran becoming contenders.

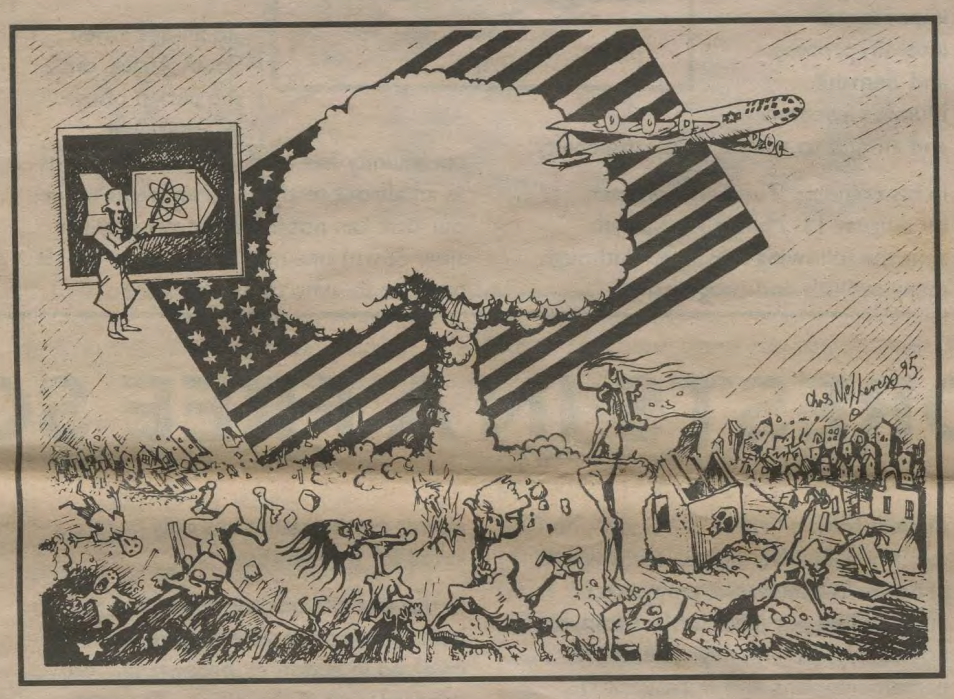
Part of the legacy of the Cold War is the incredible stockpile of weapons grade uranium and plutonium, as well as staggering amounts of radioactive waste lying all around the landscape, from Siberia to the South Pacific.

Throughout the 12 years of the current Federal Labor Government Australia has continued to mine and export uranium. Numerous visits by nuclear warships from the US and the UK have taken place. And of course US bases such as Pine Gap have kept Australia hard wired into the button to oblivion.

As the grandstanding continues over French nuclear testing, activists should ask themselves if they are being duped by the same political forces that have maintained the status quo. Despite all assurances to the contrary, the French bombs may well contain some Australian uranium.

Why is it unacceptable for the French to test their nuclear devices underground at Muraroa, but it is still acceptable to sell the uranium to them or to facilitate the detonation of the world's biggest nuclear arsenal?

It was Bob Hawke as President of the ACTU in the early 80's and then in his early days as PM, ably assisted by Paul Keating, who was particularly responsible for selling the three mines policy and doing the snow job on the opposition. This deadly piece of pragmatism allowed for the opening of Roxby Downs (aka Olympic Dam), the world's biggest uranium mine, (and now operating at a fraction of capacity because of lack of demand) and exports to France



which continue to this day.

An embargo was placed on exports of uranium to France in 1983, shortly after the election of the Hawke Labor Government. But this embargo was lifted in August 1986. The press statement for the then Minister for Resources and Energy, Gareth Evans, gave these reasons for lifting the embargo.

"This decision, which will contribute $66.4 million to the 1986/87 budget alone, was taken in the light of the need to explore every available avenue to achieve spending reductions and revenue returns. It has significantly limited the extent of cuts the Government was forced to make in other areas, including welfare.

The embargo has been expensive - a cost borne by all the Australian taxpayers - and has not pushed France towards ceasing nuclear weapons testing in the South Pacific.

The only impact of the embargo on France to date has been to relieve it of the obligation to take contracted Australian uranium at higher than spot market prices.

Australian uranium has not been used in the past, and will not be in the future, in French nuclear weapons.

Under Australia's safeguards arrangements - the strictest in the world - there is no possibility that Australian uranium can be used in the French nuclear weapons program. Two of Australia's safeguards agreements - with France and the European Community Agency, Euratom - will ensure that our uranium exported to France may only be used for peaceful purposes.

Although France is not a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, its safeguards arrangements are for all practical purposes the same as if it were."

The ALP National Conference 1994 shelved plans to expand its three mine policy after a last minute bid by PM Keating to force a change failed. The mining industry claimed that the decision would cost the country $400 million a year in lost export revenue by the end of the century. But Keating said there was no economic rationale for allowing new mines as "the world market is oversupplied and we've got more capacity than we can handle".

Australian uranium exports are currently worth about $200 million a year. To put this in context as some economic saviour, the Australian current account deficit is about $20 billion a year.

Despite the failure of the uranium industry to produce the bonanza that was promised, Australia remains a key player in the international nuclear industry. Australia has reserves of some 500,000 tonnes of ore - almost 30% of the world's uranium.

Mining is now restricted to two sites, Ranger and the giant Roxby Downs project. The third site, Nabarlek, ceased production years ago.

Ranger has some 40 million tonnes of ore (1989), mostly near the surface. Roxby Downs has some 450 million tonnes of ore rich in copper, uranium, silver and gold some 300 metres or more underground. Most of the ore at Nabarlek was mined in six months in 1979, with the last ore being processed there in 1988.

Neither Ranger nor Roxby Downs are able to comply with worker exposure levels recommended in the UK. The Australian government has failed to adopt public exposure limits.

Meanwhile, the West Australian government wants to build a nuclear reactor in the goldfields region to replace the 36 year old Lucas Heights reactor.

It should also be remembered that it was the opposition to exports of yellowcake mined at Mary Kathleen from the port of Brisbane that led to the ban on street marches by Joh Bjelke-Petersen here in Brisbane. A number of pickets at the wharves saw people nonviolently blocking the gates to the wharves, leading to confrontations with the police and numerous arrests. It was these clashes that led to the ban on all rights to demonstrate. A nuclear state is a police state!

Thousands were arrested in the ensuing civil liberties struggle. This is what the ACTU and the ALP sold out, and are still selling out.

If we are serious about the issues raised by the renewed French testing at Muruoa Atoll, then we should ignore all the monkeying around by ALP and ACTU hacks to restrict the public outrage to this one point. We must return to the one fundamental demand of the original movement against the nuclear industry in this country - leave uranium in the ground. Without the mining there can be no more Hiroshimas and no more Chernobyls. It is also time to take our finger off the trigger. The cold war is over - US bases out!

Tony Kneipp

FREE MUMIA ABU-JAMAL!

On August 7 1995 an indefinite stay of execution was issued in the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal. Mumia, a black revolutionary journalist and former Black Panther has spent more than 12 years on death row after being framed in 1982 for the murder of a Philadelphia cop.

Mumia had previously been sentenced to die by lethal injection on August 17 by Judge Albert Sabo. Sabo, a member of the fascistic Fraternal Order of Police, has the distinction of having sentenced more people to death than any other judge in the country.

On December 9 1981 Mumia came upon a dispute in which a Philadelphia cop was bashing a young black motorist who turned out to be Mumia's brother. After approaching the scene a struggle ensued in which a police officer was killed, and Mumia himself was shot and seriously injured. Mumia, despite his injury, was then seriously beaten and arrested.

In the following court case Mumia, who had been denied representation and access to witnesses, was shut out of the court room, unable to follow the proceedings and denied sufficient funds to obtain physical evidence. Not surprisingly Mumia was found guilty of murder in just six weeks by the predominantly white middle class jury even though no ballistic evidence linked the bullets that killed the cop Faulkner to Mumia's gun.

Since being in prison Mumia has continued to speak out against the system, bringing revolutionary truth to millions of people through his writing in spite of attempts by prison authorities and others to censor him and break his spirit.

Despite the stay of execution the fight to free Mumia is far from over. It is important to intensify protests and demand Mumia's freedom and an end to the racist death penalty.

In his column, "The Stay," written on August 11, Mumia Abu-Jamal sent the following message: "Although many radicals and progressives expressed joy at the stay, other political analysts saw it as a clever move by a clever judge, who did what higher courts would have done and, in so doing, attempted to blunt the edge off of a growing and militant anti-death penalty movement, in Philadelphia and beyond, thereby stymieing a series of planned demonstrations.

"Whatever the reasoning, let us utilise this precious time to build a stronger and broader movement, to not 'stay' one execution, but to halt them all. Down with the racist U.S. death penalty!

Break down the prison walls now!

"In an age when South Africa, once the pariah of the international community has abolished all executions as an affront to the inherent right to life, our task can not be to merely stay (or slow down) one man's execution. No! It must be to echo the world - the European Community, Australia, South Africa, et al. - in total abolition of this racist vestive of the lynching tree, all forms of state murder."

Protests can be made to the Republican

Governor Tom Ridge:
Governor Tom Ridge, Main Capital Building, Room 225, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania USA
17120

For further information contact:
Black United Fund/MAJ Legal Defence,
41 G S. 15th St. Philadelphia, PA 19146
Telephone (215) 732 9266

Concerned Family & Friends of Mumia Abu Jamal, PO Box 19709, Philadelphia, PA 19143 Hotline 215-552 8985

More information from:
Anarchist Black Cross,
PO Box 558
South Brisbane 4101

Free Mumia Abu-Jamal
Information Evening
6.30 Sat 23 September
Resistance Centre
29 Terrace St
New Farm
Brisbane

FREE FORESTS IN A FREE SOCIETY

It was inspiring at the recent Sydney Anarchist powwow, "Visions of Freedom", to see such a large contingent of eco-defenders from NEFA and elsewhere. It is reassuring that many such activists identify themselves with a broader movement for social change.

I was disheartened to hear in a report on the "Rural Anarchism" workshop, an old and dangerous slur levelled at the conference as a whole. Why all this chatter about ideas when we should "just do it"? I was equally disheartened to hear that the "eco-anarchism" workshop had been dominated by greenies who wanted to talk about action, particularly as I consider eco-anarchism the most promising ideology in terms of its coherence and relevance/applicability to lifestyle, organisation and action. Together, these two things provoked some thoughts, and a challenge.

Firstly it was a conference we had attended so the anti-discussion sentiment was absurd to begin with. "Just do it" may be a strong argument when the infantry are charging but if it is allowed to become an ideology in itself it tends to be a totalitarian rather than a democratic one: charisma, if not cunning, takes control.

The Old Growth emphasis the forest activists brought to the conference, crucial as it is quite apart from broader analysis of power and society, touched a chord among many of the older anarchists. It provided an excellent example of what Noam Chomsky on the Saturday night called a "goal" as distinct from a "vision". "Goals", he explained, involve urgent issues where progress is achievable, always to be informed by our ideals of freedom, but not always (as with negotiating with parliamentarians and bureaucrats) necessarily consistent with them.

Of the issues, I for one share the opinion that Old Growth is having its rightful moment at the front line of the war for consciousness. I hope that its moment does not end too depressingly but it will probably end in the next few years. If the Old Growth is lost, have those without a broader theory of social change any reason to continue at all? Doomsday theories, which offer little promise to society or the earth, are rife in the green movement. If the Old Growth is won, history suggests to me that the great mass of activists will part after drinks and return to mainstream society with a clean and invigorated conscience.

The anti-war movement is my favourite example of this. The anti-apartheid movement is bound to become another good one: whilst there was good reason to keep the goals narrow and achievable (abolish apartheid), without a broader ideological understanding and commitment, the movement has "won" without doing a thing about capitalist domination and exploitation, state violence or even racial inequalities.

So, are you a forest activist or a revolutionary? If you are not a revolutionary your career doesn't have long to go, one way or another. Let it be as clear as hell that any forest we save without changing the systems of power on the planet has only been saved for a generation.

In the end it is not the issue that binds us, nor is it whether we are involved in action or propaganda; on barricades or in the office. The fight for the environment is the latest, and perhaps by definition the final chapter in a struggle that has raged since the first time a human gained domination over another. The struggle that underpins the salvation of the forests, as it does every movement for social change, is the struggle for freedom. We may have no society without environment but we have no environment without a free society.

Hamish

EDITORIAL

This is our fourth edition of the anarchist, marking our initial goal of putting out four editions in the first year. We believe that we have also achieved our other basic goal - to provide a forum for radical libertarian political debate, not just dish up the rhetoric of the right line.

The reader will continue to find articles and letters which express opinions that are as far removed as possible from those of the editorial collective. The editorial collective has enough trouble agreeing with itself. Don't expect us to agree with anybody else!

Our further goals for this paper are to make it a truly national paper, and to get an even wider involvement from political activists. Don't be shy.

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North Quay
Brisbane 4002
theanarch@byteback.ipana.aug.au

GREEK ANARCHIST EDITOR IN PRISON

The editor of a weekly Anarchist newspaper ALFA, 25 year old Spiros Dapergolas was arrested along with 28 year old Marios Hristostomou for an attempted bank robbery in late June.

After being beaten by the police Spiros was questioned as to his political beliefs, his involvement in ALFA and his relationship to certain "known" Anarchists.
Spiros made this statement - "I want to make it clear that I am an anarchist. And that means a number of things. I don't feel any ethical obligation towards the monetary system. To be exact, I desire its destruction in every form. The word "bank" means the sentencing to hunger of entire peoples, means the acceptance of the usurer, means one of the main pillars of the mechanism of exploitation and cannot be ignored. The bank is the most direct evidence of authority; the flow of money is found to correspond with the flow of blood and sweat, with the "detail" that the blood and sweat flows from others and money ends up in others hands. Who can condemn the taking of money from a bank? Noone."

For more information contact
Anarchist Black Cross
PO Box 558
South Brisbane 4001
For letters of support Spiros can be contacted at Koridallos prison at the following address:
Spiros Dapergolas
Pteriga 3
Dikastikes Filakes Koridallou
18100 Greece

LEFT POLITICS IN A TIME OF RESENTMENT

Several recent events have been the subject of much media speculation. Most important of these is the public outrage at the French Nuclear tests and the rebuff delivered to the Goss Labor government. It is now well known that the Federal Government was totally surprised and then outflanked by an opportunistic John Howard who remade himself as the concerned citizen.

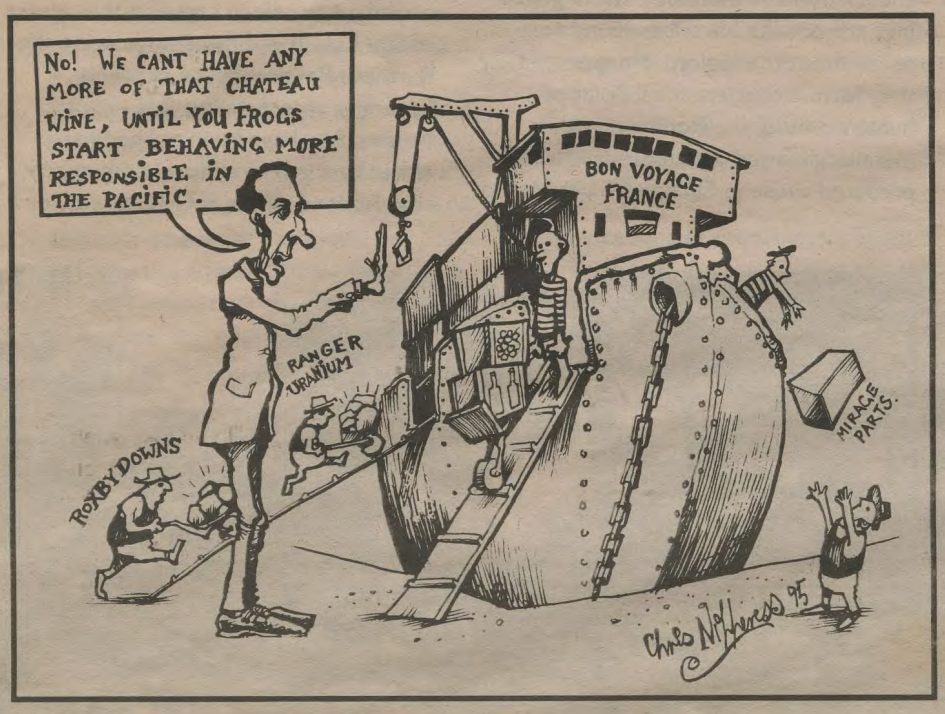
Howard got carried away with the new role of champion of the people when he claimed that he would ban exports of uranium to France. He quickly retreated of course and the sight of a stuttering attempt to explain his turn around provided one of the more interesting moments on recent television.

The Goss government too was embarrassed by the results of the election. It had given its campaign over to the exclusive control of the men who by their own 'admission' were "the best and brightest". The "big brains", as they are called inside the party, concentrated on what they perceived as the government's principal weakness, the law and order issue. The tide of anger over the proposed freeway and the tricky footwork of the former revolutionary, Drew Hutton, isolated the weaknesses of the Labor mandarins. Like the true technocratic robots they are, they can administer a system but they cannot ask the simple but fundamental question of whether the system is a good one or not.

As beneficiaries of capitalism the mandarins are incapable of seeing the point of view of the growing numbers of victims. Protests are perceived rather as a sign of the lack of gratitude and thoughtfulness among the public. In this situation those who administer the state begin to think that "democratic politics is difficult" and they start to dream of absolute power. The fate of the mandarins is that they are doomed to be the rational managers of an increasingly irrational system. But we should not spend too much time sympathising with their plight. They are after all extremely well paid.

Everyone agrees that the response to the nuclear tests and the attitude of the Queensland voters are significant but they also make the mistake of seeing these phenomena as new. They are in fact quite old. The best way to describe what is going on is to take a look at the German Marxist, Theodor Adorno's analysis of fascism. Adorno argued that the Nazis were able to exploit the ressentiment (resentment) in the middle class and peasantry against a system that promised them liberty and the right to pursue happiness but then bankrupted them. It was the Nazis who succeeded in reconciling the victims of the system to the system.

The Nazis did this by giving the peoples' resentment a focus, primarily the Jews but also gays, trade unionists, gypsies, the mentally ill etc. So instead of seeing the



capitalist class and the capitalist system as the enemy the great mass of the people railed on about the Jews and the Red menace.

In our own crisis ridden times ressentiment has returned as a political force. It is refined in the mass media, especially on talk back radio. John Laws would be the prime harnesser but Alan Jones and our own Rod Henshaw have also played a part. The U.S. because it is in an advanced state of moral decay is of course awash with the same mixture of hatred and anger which is focussed on blacks, the unemployed, gays, the mentally ill, and feminists.

Generally oppositions are in a better position to harness ressentiment, and this the Federal coalition has tried to do with its talk of government weakness over the nuclear tests and also of the betrayal of the "battlers". But the example of Nazi Germany is a reminder that governments can exploit popular anger and resentment.

I believe then that the widespread nature of the reaction to the French nuclear tests can best then be thought of as proof not of the growing political awareness of Australian citizens but rather as a sign that the middle class, especially, is torn by rage and frustration at the continuation of the economic crisis over which they have no control. That resentment could take an international focus because the cold war is over and it is now safe to protest about the military actions of a Western nation.

That is also why the protests not only came from non-traditional quarters but also took on such a racist and nationalistic form. The hatred emerged in attacks on French citizens rather than on the French government and there was no talk at all of the prime victims, the indigenous peoples of the region.

Again in Queensland the anger over the proposed freeway did not take an ecological form but rather focussed on the deterioration in local property values and the fate of the local koalas. The Veto Group clearly set their sights on bringing down the Goss Government and they were aided in this by the Greens despite the fact that the Goss Government was providing an environmental package which frankly far surpassed anything offered by previous Queensland administrations.

What then should the Left do in this situation? Well for a start we should acknowledge that the politics of hatred is once more back on the agenda. That means we will all have to struggle against racism and sexism and homophobia once more. But we should also strive to give our politics a positive and utopian focus. We should not play the dangerous game of supporting a group just because they are angry.

In the thirties the German Communist Party at one stage entered into alliances with Nazis because the latter were angry at the state. Similarly today some leftists are attracted to the ideas of Australia's leading fascist commentator, B. A. Santamaria, because he continually attacks finance capital. Likewise Drew Hutton and the Greens have taken on board pathological elements from the media and the police because they are full of resentment. Such manoeuvres might seem clever but in reality they place one on the tiger's back.

However the most dangerous tiger of all is that of nationalism. We should not be deluded by the fact that the globalisation of capital has weakened the economic power of the state into thinking that the nation state cannot play a role in politics. One has only to see the Liberal Party bellowing out Advance Australia Fair to realise that nationalism is still a potent and reactionary force. It is also for this reason that the whole issue of Australia becoming a republic has been robbed of any radical content. Instead of being an opportunity to reject Australia's reactionary pro-imperialist past it has become a down payment for our initiation into the fold of an alternative Asian power bloc.

Our politics then should at all times be principled and positive. It is our fate to be born into a time when the capitalist system is entering into a period of stagnation and decay. We should never be misled by the constant trumpeting in the media of the successes of capitalism into thinking that they are in control or know what to do. The Left may be at an historical low but we still can influence events if we return to fundamental principles.

I believe that these are that ethnic, tribal and nationalistic loyalties should never replace our commitment to creating the conditions in which humanity as a species will flourish. We must keep our eyes on the prize - a self managing, self-loving, positive, community oriented and ecologically responsible society.

Gary MacLennan

The Dogs

Puppet blue why do you do?
Do you know why you're so cruel?
Are you thinking of your job
Or are you just a mindless clod?

Did you join for fear of sinking?
Or perhaps you're just soul dead from drinking
For that is Dionysus' wish
As your body dissolves with sweat and piss.

You tax collect and keep us poor
Because the industries have their claws
Embedded in your badge
That crowns the crown on your hat.

For a victimless crime we do pay
And not just with my time I say
But with no education and freedom of will
Will keep us falling down progression hill.

Q Papa Yandi

BURMA - THE OPIUM WARS

BURMA

Now that the State Law and Order Restoration Council in Burma, or persuasive elements within it, have seen fit to release the popular Aung San Suu Kyi from her six years of house arrest some observers will be hoping for a loosening of restrictions over public life in Burma. Some call it Myanmar these days but to most of its inhabitants it is still Burma (Poomar). To the majority of its people political freedom and democracy are still largely meaningless.

In comparison with other countries on the S.E. Asian peninsula Burma is a large country diverse in geography and ethnicity. It shares a long and porous border with Red China in the north-east and Thailand in the south-east, an extensive coast with the Andaman Sea, and western borders with Bangladesh and India. It stretches from the south of Thailand to the foothills of the Himalayas. A remarkable expanse of beautiful, varied, and wealthy countryside.

Since the British Empire began moving into Burma, reorganising its administration and economy to suit colonial needs, a number of influential Burmese people embraced a nationalism aimed at removing the colonial administration or at least limiting its incursions. When the Japanese moved into S.E. Asia as part of their expansionist drive in W.W.II some of these Burmese nationalists saw an ally against British domination. Aung San, father of Suu Kyi, and Ne Win who became the godfather of Burmese nationalism spring to mind. These two and a number of other activists trained with the Japanese to provide them with support in their war effort.

The Japanese failed to secure the territory and as they left their conquests a power vacuum developed. Britain was unable to fill the gap and the U.S.A. was more concerned then with N.E. Asia, especially Japan and Korea. In these circumstances the international community adopted a strategy which made few or no gains towards stabilising the government, military, or economy. By this time of course Aung San and Ne Win were no longer Japanese sympathisers.

In the late 1940's, while the international community was busy carving up the spoils of WWII, not a lot of careful planning and consultation was used to ensure stability in countries like Burma. Bear in mind that Rangoon and Mandalay, the main administrative points both before and after British occupation, are located towards the southern part of the country. The greater land mass is to the north and historically has been largely autonomous. As I understand it the International Courts hit upon the simple notion that Burma could be divided into autonomous or semi-autonomous regions and amongst them take turns at sharing control of broader national and international affairs with power rotating at three year intervals. This arrangement was called the Panlong Agreement. The regions were the Chin and Kachin states which share language, script, and commerce with mainland China; the Shan also historically linked with southern China as well as Thailand and Laos; and the southern Burmans with historical links to India in the west and Thailand in the east. These groupings are not the hill tribes found scattered about the region. More accurately they form an ancient focal point of human cultural development with metallurgical and agricultural skills that predated those in Europe by a thousand years or so. The Panlong Agreement probably seemed okay as far as these plans go.

I spoke with my Salar (meaning 'master' as in skilled and educated) who is an 86 yr old former Shan soldier who fought against the Japanese with Allied support during WWII. He claimed that after the war ended Shan State had first bite at the Panlong cherry and that the country was ruled without much trouble for the first three year term. When the political control was procedurally transferred to the group based in Rangoon it became and still is entrenched there. The early 1950's saw the period when Ne Win and his associates cemented their power base with a strong policy of Burmese nationalism and a peppering of Maoism which plunged the country into an isolationism which in many ways has made Burma such an interesting place.

It is the mid 1990's now. Burma is making military arrangements with China, it is engaged in an oil and gas project with Thai and French support, and it is making moves to become accepted into the ASEAN block. The isolationism which stood for decades is breaking down. Even though Ne Win retired as leader some time ago his influence over internal and foreign policy was a major factor until his death in the last year or so. Now that powerful SLORC commanders are keen to develop the resources with which Burma abounds they must not only contend with the numerous insurgent groups but also appease the industrialised world which they depend on for technical expertise.

The current shift in attitudes both on a regional and international level have played a key role in securing the release of Suu Kyi. It is difficult to imagine the Burmese Political Police suddenly becoming nice guys but it is easy to believe they have been pushed hard either by the international community, rival factions within SLORC, greed, or a combination of the above. I am sure Suu Kyi is glad to get out of the house at last and I hope she is too clever to be duped. The democracy movement has some wicked adversaries and they are not all Burmese.

KARENNI MILITIA FROM REFUGEE CAMP NO. 5

INSURGENCY

Over the last 50 years Burma has been home to many insurgent groups which have fought the military regime in Rangoon. Some of these groups have been formed along political lines waging armed struggles for democratic government but the majority of groups have been formed along ethnic lines and have fought for self determination. In a country with so much ethnic diversity there are numerous groups which resent the interference of a central military dictatorship that uses the vicious tactics of exploitation for which SLORC is infamous. The Karen, Shan, Mon, and Wa groups spring to mind but there are and have been many others over the years. To give a comprehensive account of these groups is beyond my capabilities and the available space so for now I will concentrate on what I know from my own experience in the border region between Thailand and Burma where Karen, Karenni, and Shan groups have been fighting for decades.

For nearly 50 years Karen insurgents have been organised into a group called the Karen National Union (KNU) which is the umbrella group for the various different Karen 'tribes'. While the KNU waged its insurgency against a rather poorly equipped and trained Burmese army they were able to hold their own territory which straddles the Thai/Burma border. If things got too rough they often escaped into Thailand where they could count on support from their fellow Karen in Thailand and if the Burmese army pursued them across the border.....well, since the Vietnam war Thailand has had the best equipped and trained army/airforce in the region. There remains a degree of dislike between the Thais and the Burmese but business is business.

To continue insurgencies these days demands money for weapons effective against the enemy. KNU has traditionally used logging concessions in the vast teak forests they control. Thai business has been an integral part of this arrangement and as in all military dictatorships the army and business interests have close links. As the Burmese army becomes better equipped, covets the considerable wealth in the area, and does business with the Thai military/industrial complex the horizon looks bleak for the KNU. The current oil and gas pipeline being developed by a consortium of Burmese, Thai, and French interests is of vastly greater value than the teak logging which has led to a steep drop in sympathy for the KNU amongst the Thai military. Even when SLORC forces enter Thailand and attack Thai military personnel reprisals are weak.

The KNU does claim to be fighting for independence and democracy but after so many years of armed struggle old habits die hard and military commanders often exercise great influence over their own villages and those from other locales. Their priorities are often very different from those of their people who prefer to live peacefully in the bush. As the military campaign escalated the KNU, desperate for the means to wage war raised money for guns by sacrificing the large teak logs which ensure future generations of trees. No doubt they get some assault rifles and mortars worth $A300-$A500 for a few thousand dollars worth of teak. Thailand likes to do business; they call it 'constructive engagement' but when they are engaged in constructing an oil/gas line I expect they are more comfortable dealing with a stable SLORC than an unstable KNU which lost its two major bases - Mannerplaw and Kawmoora during February and March this year (1995).

Perhaps even more damaging to the KNU has been the defection of some KNU guerrilas to an outfit called the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army

(DKBA) which is supplied, supported, and used by SLORC. When SLORC mounted their final assaults on Mannerplaw and Kawmoora it is widely believed that DKBA defectors were front line troops in the attacks.

The publicised reason for this split between KNU/DKBA is that the KNU is Christian dominated and that the Buddhist elements were being frustrated. Newspapers aside, the consensus amongst the locals I spoke to was that personal and family rivalries played a major part. Very little of the money made from the teak finds its way into civilian aid or infrastructure and the insurgent soldiers themselves receive scant medical or non-military supplies. Meanwhile the upper echelons of the KNU often keep themselves and their families remote from the fighting, in western or wealthy asian countries.

Latest reports state Bo (Burmese for 'big man, general') Mya is in hiding - a wise move in terms of personal safety. However if he and the other KNU leaders wish to maintain a struggle for the freedom of their people they would do well to regroup during the current wet season and make more tangible efforts to secure the welfare of their people. Perhaps this is already an impossibility and of course there is always the temptation to just 'take the money and run'.

THE DRUG TRADE

Since the late 1940's the rackets involving Shan opium and later heroin, the value added product would have to rate as some of the most cynical of international enterprises. The multi-national petro-chemical conglomerates and their subsidiaries in the arms trade and the huge pharmaceutical industries are worse. But the way in which the opium and heroin trade has been used to manipulate regional politics in Indochina is a graphic demonstration of how elements in the U.S. military/industrial complex are capable of using any means at their disposal to promote their own interests. If you want the myriad facts GET AND READ 'The Politics of Heroin in South East Asia' by Alfred McCoy. The stress inflicted on the cultures and ethnic groups involved is diabolical.

To provide some of the historical background it is worth understanding that opium has been carefully cultivated and propogated throughout Eurasia for well in excess of 5,000 years. It has been a valuable medicine for a variety of applications and its unwanted effects pale in comparison to those resulting from the use of alcohol and modern prescription tranquilizers. If it was 'bad' medicine it would not have stood the test of time. In pre-cash economies it is a useful currency and continues to fulfill this role where the occasional remote cultures are able to escape the drug control policies which emanate from the U.S.A. and the international agencies dominated by that country.

After WWII the U.S.A. was firmly committed to a policy of destabilizing any government they arbitrarily defined as 'communist sympathisers'. One of the most effective ways to destabilise a country is to engage that government in a long and expensive war. To put the heat on Red China the U.S.A. fostered a long running civil war using the Nationalist Chinese (KMT) under the leadership of Chiang Kai Shek.

Before Chiang Kai Shek's organisation was billed as a Nationalist Army fighting Communism the KMT under a different nom de guerre was a criminal organisation or affiliation of gangs operating out of Shiang Hai which was the "anything goes city' of prewar China. Chiang Kai Shek presided over activities such as prostitution, extortion, labour organization (i.e. slavery), and the drug trade. The ideas espoused by Mao were poison to the racketeers of Shiang Hai. As the Reds gained power Chiang Kai Shek's outfit retreated to Taiwan where they continue to live in the style to which they were accustomed. To justify U.S. financial, diplomatic, and military support the KMT maintained a protracted guerrilla war which was increasingly concentrated in the south of China and the north of Thailand and Burma. The KMT fighters maintained their struggle for about 20 years but everything has its price. Uncle Sam wouldn't piss on his burning mother unless he could turn a profit. Considering the economies of the cultures in the region it is not surprising that opium was the source of foreign exchange.

The locations of the Chinese, Shan, Burmese, and Thai territories and the volatile politics there over the years created a situation where Chinese business interests could exploit Shan opium to enrich themselves and pay off Uncle Sam. The Shan armies could afford the weapons to resist control from Rangoon. The Thais are very much tied to U.S. foreign policy and are usually happy to do business when the opportunity presents. As time dragged on any hopes that Taiwan and the KMT might retake mainland China faded but still that's no reason to stop a good racket. By the 1960's the U.S. was getting into Vietnam which provided not only a huge market of cashed up G.I.s but also a useful infrastructure with which to conduct large scale smuggling operations.

The heroin trade is dominated by Chinese businesses in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and China. I visited a KMT village with a Thai Army helipad 100m away, 20 minutes walk from the Burmese border down an army road. A day's walk over the border is another KMT village with a similar road that leads to Khun Sa's base approx 50km away. The village has about 400 mules. The Shan provide the opium, the venue, and a steady supply of conscripts while those in the positions of influence including the chemists are Chinese. The image Khun Sa portrays in the media is that 'his' Mong Tai Army are fighting the SLORC dictatorship and to establish an independant Shan State. After working for the KMT, the CIA, and the Burmese Government over a 45 year period his loyalties are a mystery to me. I heard from several sources, all Burmese Shan, that an estimated 500 Shan men had been executed for heroin use over the last 5 years and that 200 of them were in the last 18 months. Many others are executed as spies if they are perceived as a threat to the command structure. Still, the arrangement ensures that given the terrain it is most unlikely that Rangoon will occupy Mong Tai territory. More likely they would enter into a business arrangement.

When I see a Mong Tai Commander in Chief with the dark skin of a Dai (as Shan call themselves) and a name like Seng Pfa I might accept the MTA as insurgents fighting for Shan independence. If they were genuine freedom fighters I wouldn't care if they made their money from barbiturates and serepax.

Salar Kyow

Barricade Books/Info shop
115 Sydney Road,
Brunswick 3056
Ph (03) 9387 6646
10/7/95

Dear Anarchist reader,

We are a specialty bookshop with a wide of literature on politics, history and many social issues and we have come under attack from the Victoria Police.

On Monday 3rd, July, 1995 at 2pm five police officers raided the premises of Barricade Books on Sydney Road, Brunswick. With unsigned warrants the police barged their way through the shop and the living quarters at the back. Upon entering the living quarters the police aimed loaded firearms at the two occupants of the house - and made threats of violence if their wishes weren't met. The police then proceeded to search the house, breaking down a locked door, throwing personal belongings about, taking photographs of stock and bedrooms, taping conversations and confiscating stock.

The stock which was taken was a pamphlet on the gay relationship of two political activists. The drawn front cover depicted the two men love-making. Two t-shirts were also seized - one illustrating a semi-erect penis with the phrase "Jesus is Cumming" and the other with the slogan "Fuck the world's police - No world order". They were all said to be obscene. The organisers of the bookshop are expected to be charged with obscenity.

There are two issues at stake here. The first is censorship. Heterosexual imagery is prevelant throughout our society, but when homosexual images are made public they are deemed "obscene" and the police confiscate the items. This a blatant challenge to all non-mainstream sexual groups attempting to self-determine. If we do not condemn their harrassment all avenues of expression and dissent will be squashed.

The second is police violence and disregard for civil liberties. When the police raided the bookshop with no valid warrant and aimed loaded firearms at the occupants, this was obviously a tactic of intimidation and an infringement of their basic rights. Unfortunately, in Victoria, these violent police tactics are widespread and should be condemned publicly. The recently issued report by Amnesty International has brought international recognition to the repression occurring under the Kennett government. To remain silent in times of repression is a crime, so we urge your organisation to publicly support our campaign and its demands to:

Condemn the raid as undemocratic and against basic civil liberties.

Demand that the police return the merchandise.

Demand the records of the raid be returned.

Colin McNaughton
for Friends of Barricade Books

LORRELLE SAUNDERS - APOLOGY

In the editions No.2 and No.3 of The Anarchist an allegation arising out of the CJC inquiry into the arrest and imprisonment of Lorrelle Saunders was as follows:-

"One of the things that came up during the inquiry but was suppressed was plans by Saunders with a Special Branch cop Barry Krosch to set up a group of Murri militants on firearms charges. This was in the period leading up to the Commonwealth Games in 1982. There was also talk of setting up the Ananda Marga in the same way. These discussions were recorded in one of Saunders' notebooks. Clearly she was totally steeped in the culture of "dropping a brick" herself."

The writers have investigated the allegation as a consequence of objections that such allegation is false.

After perusing the Transcript of the Proceedings and after making enquiries with the CJC, a letter from the CJC addressed the allegation as follows:-

"As far as I am aware there was no evidence to suggest that Miss Saunders or Barry Krosch had been improperly attempting to "set up" any persons on firearm charges. Similarly there was nothing to suggest that her own notebook contained admissions against interest concerning her "setting up" any person with or without the assistance of Barry Krosch."

We are of the opinion that the allegation is therefore incorrect and there is no evidence to support the allegation that she attempted in any way to set up Murri activists, the Ananda Marga (or anybody else) on gun charges.

We have submitted this article because we were publicly linked with edition 3 of 'The Anarchist,' although, we had nothing to do with the making of or the publication of the false allegations. Nevertheless we have apologised to Lorrelle Saunders for what was an horrendous allegation. Our apology has been accepted.

TERRY FISHER
BRIAN LAVER

McGOSS

Narrator - (To the audience of World Environment Day at Roma St Forum not long before the Qld State Elections were called)

Hello, today we are performing the first act of that famous Scottish play McGoss. It is a rehearsal for when we put on the final act just before the elections outside Parliament House. This scene opens in a witches cave where McGoss sees three hemp witches out on the moors concocting a large brew of pot.

Witches -
(The three hemp witches are
standing around a garbage tin
stirring the pot and
throwing hemp leaves into it.)
Double, double, toil and trouble
Fire burn and cauldron bubble
Root of hemplock digged in dark
Tail of skunk and oil of hash
Sinsemilla, purple heads
Buddha stick, new guinea reds
For a charm of powerful trouble
In the cauldron boil and bubble
Spliff of green and spook of grass
To some the politicians farce
Double, double toil and trouble
Legalise hemp on the double
By the pricking of my thumb
Something wicked this way comes.

(enter McGoss wearing a stage mask made from an election poster and riding a silver stage horse with a sign "The law is an ass" upon it)

McGoss -
(He takes a stage joint from one of the witches and starts puffing on it)
Oh wise witches tell to me
Of my electoral destiny.
(with confidence)

Witches -
McGoss only yesteryear
Thou whined in thy play
"The Smell of Spook"
That the hills are alive
With the smell of ganga.

McGoss -
That was in my foolish youth
I will never decriminalise
Marijuana in my lifetime,
And legalisation
Is of course unthinkable
(arrogantly).

Witches -
McGoss, We tell you the truth
That thou shall be Premier,
Till the trees themselves do move.
Behold your vision of the premiers
Before you.

(A line of people holding placards with large election style portraits of the previous premiers of Queensland, starting with Joh and going back to Governor Bowen walk onto the stage and form a semi-circle. At the end of the line a final person holds up a land rights flag to recognise the original sovereignty of the Murris. At the front of the semi-circle two stilt walkers form a physical cave.)

McGoss -
Well look at that !
Is that the people protesting ?
Well what is that ?
Is that a vision in a cave ?
I'm seeing things in a cave !
My God, It's all the Premiers of Queensland !

Witches -
There was a time with trees aplenty
No laws to stop natures bounty
But now the land's deforested
And all because of you.
Tell us Wayne what will you do ?

McGoss -
Ha, ha, ha.
I think I shall be
Premier for a long time.
How can we use hemp instead of trees
And how can hemp trees move ?

Witches -
What about the hemp car
That Henry Ford made
And what about that pot plant named bud
That sticks to you like mud?

McGoss -
I did not recognise that plant.
I swear, I could not identify that plant,
(frightened)
And as for a new hemp industry
That's the kind of foolish fancy
That's being bandied about in South Australia.
(aside)
I don't think I need to worry but then there is an election coming up. Well, something happened to those old dead premiers. I better worry a little bit about the hemp campaign.

Witches -
Hemp for plastic clothes and paper
Legalise hemp don't leave it till later.

Everyone -
Hemp, hemp, hooray
Hemp, hemp, hooray
Hemp, hemp, hooray

HEMP held its demo outside Parliment House on the Wednesday before the elections as was predicted and the Goss Government is currently in trouble because it arrogantly chose to ignore single issue campaigns such as the call for the legalisation of marijuana.

Bernadette le Goullon and Syd Moore

Thierry Bouhours
Ryans Road
Uki 2482 NSW
(066) 795 422

Dear Brian and friends of the 'Anarchist'

One of our friends, Robin Harrison, was convicted a year ago for the possession and use of cannabis, by the local Murwillumbah court. He is fighting against this decision, on the basis of libertarian principles. He needs the solidarity of all freedom lovers. Here is the statement he pronounced today at the district court of Murwillumbah where his appeal was rejected. He intends to appeal this decision to the Supreme Court using the same argument:

Any complete list of the supporters of prohibition would contain the names of all the drug dealers, all the drug cartels and all the associatedly corrupt. If they like it so much it should be worth finding out why.

Do these laws work?
Do they keep the drugs off the streets and out of the playground?
Do they cut down on the activities of the drug dealers?
Do they reduce the wealth of the drug cartels?
Do they reduce the influence of the associatedly corrupt?
[Found in political, Legal, commercial and law enforcement circles.]

If the answer to any of these is no then we have serious problems. The answer to all of them is no!!!

Do these laws fulfil their rationale? According to this letter I have from the Attorney General's Department, no. It says here, the policy supporting existing drug laws is the desire to minimise harm to individuals and to society as the result of drug use.

Individuals who choose to take drugs are harmed by having to deal with criminals, being ignorant of the quality of the drugs, having other dangerous and potentially lethal drugs substituted, being provided with an uninformed environment, and being obliged to pay exorbitant, prohibition inflated prices.

Individuals who choose not to take drugs are harmed by the increase in criminality occasioned by these laws. Society as a whole is threatened and compromised by the laws since the prohibition inflated prices of these drugs cause them to be aggressively marketed by people who don't care of they sell cannabis, heroin, cocaine or draino, so long as they make lots of money. In addition, the cost to our society of obviously ineffectual and counterproductive policing and administration is immense.

The policy supporting existing drug laws is the desire to minimise harm to individuals and society as a result of drug use. But we see that the effect of these laws is the desire to maximise harm to individuals and society as a result of drug use.

The other effect of these laws is to create the environment where drug dealers, drug cartels and the associatedly corrupt can thrive. In fact, so important are these laws to the cartels and the associatedly corrupt that they cannot exist unless we, as a society, decide that we have the right to dictate what other people put into their own bodies. Reap what you sow.

So the laws don't work, the results are diametrically opposed to the stated rationale, the cartels and associatedly corrupt can't exist without them and they are the only people to benefit from them. If those are the results one could reasonably suspect that those were the intentions.

When it comes to the question of innocence, since my actions have harmed no-one, arguably not even myself because, in all recorded history, no-one has died from the ingestion of cannabis, no matter what you may do to me, or may leave being done to me, my conscience is clear and, as a matter of principle, I will accept no penalty from this court. If fined I will not pay. If imprisoned I cease to function as a human being.

What is in question here is your innocence. You may say that you are constrained by N.S.W. Law but, as members of the human race you are personally responsible for the consequences of your own actions. How much longer can you justify providing aid to the cartels? You have the power, right now, to smash the cartels and the associatedly corrupt, by finding me innocent because, without these laws they can't exist. Your decision today is a public statement of who you align yourself with.

So tell us. Who's side are you on?

Robin Harrison
Uki
066 795 121.

This was the defence, for 6 plants, presented on appeal at the District Court in Murwillumbah on the 29/5/95. The judge indeed indicated his alignment with the cartels and so we must now appeal his decision to the Supreme Court. The cost of appealing to the District Court was $118.00. The Supreme Court is probably much more expensive and so donations to a fighting fund would help all of us with our human rights and can be addressed to :

Robin Harrision
C/- P.O. UKI
N.S.W. 2484.

None of this money will be spent on lawyers.

Thanx for all your help.
Thierry Bouhours.

POT PARTY AT PARLIAMENT

The recent Queensland State elections produced a result that stunned most political observers when the Goss government was returned by the narrowest of possible margins - one seat, with the final seat, Mundingburra, in Townsville, being won by sixteen votes. The result is still in doubt, with a challenge to the Mundingburra result by the Liberal-National coalition still before the courts.

This was a stunning reversal for the ALP's strategy of going as far to the right as they could so as to drive the "conservative" parties off the edge, in the assumption that there was no threat from the left at all.

Instead what happened was a widespread protest vote against the arrogance of the Goss government, with votes going to the Greens, the Democrats and independent candidates.

I was one of those independent candidates, along with three other members of Brisbane HEMP.

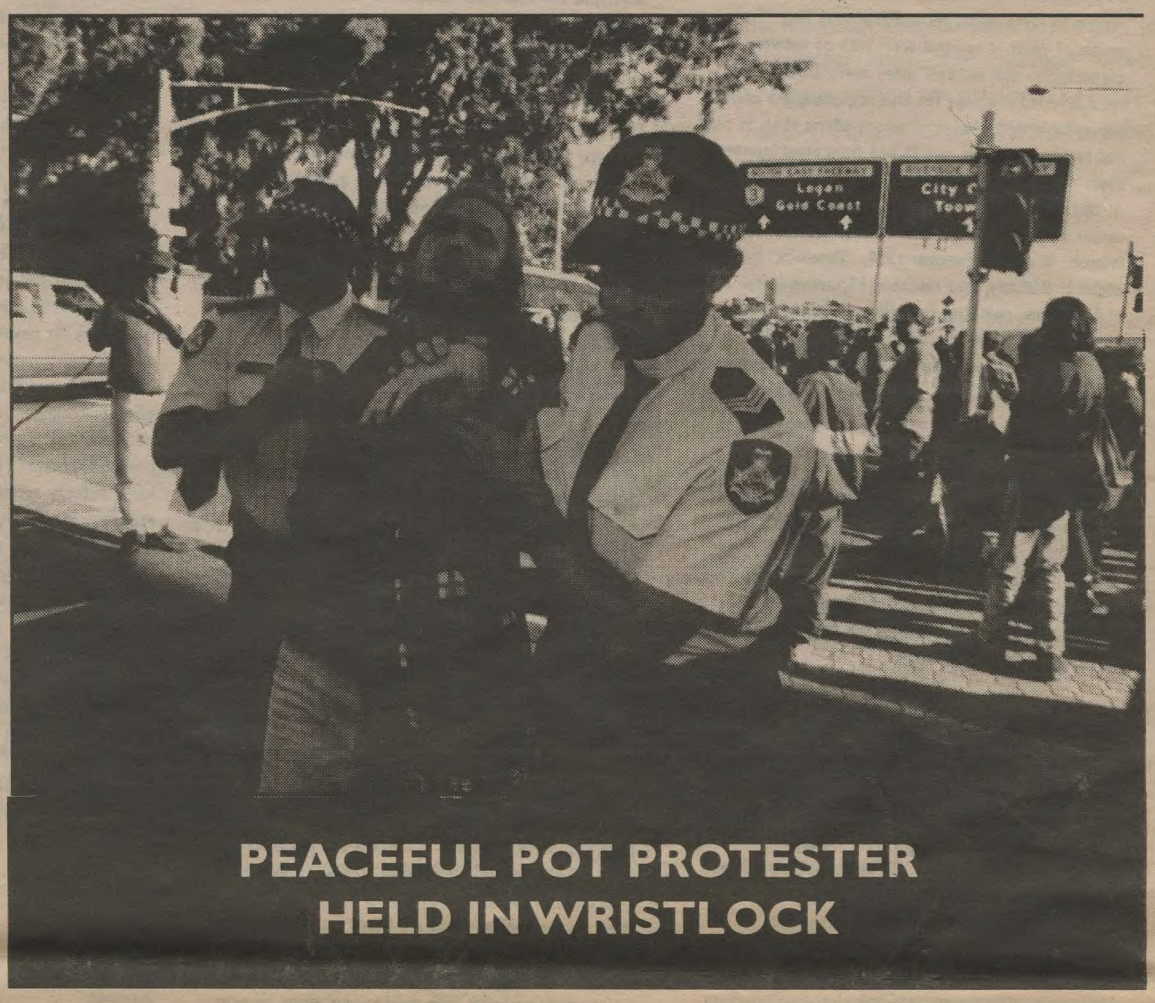
Why run for Parliament? Not with any belief that any of us were about to be catapulted into power, that's for sure. Basically it gave us an opportunity to vent our spleen on the Goss government over their arrogant and hypocritical indifference to the current drug laws. And yes, political activists still get busted for pot up here all the time, along with the poor. Somehow the Labor lawyers don't end up in court quite so often.

Running in the polls didn't quench our taste for a bit of direct action. The Wednesday before the elections (12/6/95) saw us down outside Parliament House again. For the second time in a year I was arrested for smoking a joint there. After that I missed most of the action, which saw the clown and the stilt walker arrested. The crowd of some 1200 people sat in the intersection right in front of Parliament House, blocking off the freeway for an hour. One young man was badly hurt when a car took off with him on the bonnet. He came off at quite a speed 40 metres down the road, injuring his head, arm (broken) and ankle.

I was released from the watchhouse in time to catch up with the crowd heading back in that direction, and just in time to see half a dozen more arrests, mostly for insulting language. In one incident, one of the motor cycle cops knocked a young kid off his skateboard, and then arrested two of his friends when they abused him for doing it!

As at previous demonstrations, they made only a token number of arrests for smoking pot. The clown did his best to get arrested for smoking, but ended up getting charged with assault, a charge he ended up getting off in court, defending himself.

For me as a long term anarchist it has been a learning experience to be so heavily involved in a reform campaign with limited goals. The goal is in essence a scrapping of the current drug laws. Short of revolution, this means a vote in Parliament.



PEACEFUL POT PROTESTER HELD IN WRISTLOCK

THE CAR'S ONLY JUST STARTING TO MOVE HERE, BUT THEN HE TOOK OFF!

I am not a member of the Greens or the ALP - I don't believe that we can change society's problems by getting the good guys into Parliament. But I don't believe that there is anything wrong with running candidates to participate in the political debate, and to put pressure on the mainstream parties on key issues. Nor do I agree with the logic that we have to vote against the Tories, and therefore for the ALP. I'm glad we've given Goss and the ALP a good kick in the shins. They've gotten away with that game for much too long.

The reason I have argued against voting in the past is that it is a form of political passivity masquerading as action - you tick the box and then do nothing for three years (or four). What now worries me about this traditional anarchist approach is that in fact we have simply encouraged a further degree of passivity. It's easy to say "I don't vote, I'm an anarchist", but are you really doing anything?

How the hell are we going to have the revolution if we can't even get it together to smoke a bit of pot? Most young working people see the laws for what they are - the naked expression of state power over their lives, their jobs, their bodies. But for some reason I find myself explaining it patiently over and over again to the left intellectuals.

As anarchists we need to get our heads on straight about our immediate goals and how to fight for them. It is vital that we get involved in the struggles of the day, instead of standing back from them because they are somehow not "anarchist" or "revolutionary". I would quite happily support don't vote or vote informal campaigns again if they were part of a broader political movement. I would also quite happily run again as a candidate to keep the pressure up on drug law reform.

Two of the other three HEMP candidates, Bernadette and Guy, have been active anarchis s for years. We remain active and unrepentant!

Tony Kneipp

THE ANARCHIST COMPUTER NETWORK - A YEAR LATER

A year ago, i wrote an article called "A Proposal To Set Up An Anarchist Computer Network", which was originally published in the australian paper "The Anarchist". I've recently discovered it was also reprinted by the british paper "Freedom", the italian "Umanita Nova" and the french "Monde Libertaire". As the net has now become a reality in Australia and my ideas and knowledge have developed a long way beyond the point they were at a year ago, i feel it's time to write a follow-up.

The @NET really began in Melbourne, Australia's second biggest city, with an anarchist BBS called "The Xchange". This started in early 1993 as a dial-in bulletin board system (BBS), which allowed people with their own computers and modems to call in via the telephone system to swap messages and read text files. For a couple of years, it ran this way, with no network connections - and not very many users. Late in 1994, we connected it up the the Internet, giving the users access to international email which allows them to send and receive electronic mail to and from other Internet users all round the world.
At this point, the number of users grew dramatically. A couple of months before The Xchange was connected to Internet, in about November 1994, "Byteback" BBS began in Brisbane, two thousand kilometres to the north of Melbourne, operating from Holus Bolus Anarchist Bookshop. It had an Internet connection from the beginning and provided the same service as The Xchange, allowing people to dial in from home with their own computers.

However, this bulletin board could also be used by coming into the shop and this allowed people who didn't have computers to get access to the network. Sadly, Holus Bolus closed down at the end of July this year, leaving Byteback homeless and without its dial-in line. However, it's still running and is available to the anarchist movement in Brisbane and hopefully one day it will be fully operational again.

During this period, things were happening in Sydney too. "The Media Room" was established by an anarchist collective who were working towards setting up an open access multi-media resource centre. They established Internet links around the end of 1994 and by mid 1995 had their own BBS running, called "Catalyst". Originally the Media Room was based at Jura Books, but is now operating from Black Rose bookshop. Jura are now working on setting up their own media group.

In February 1995 an anarchist bookshop opened up in Melbourne, called Barricade. Soon after opening, there was a public access computer terminal in the shop, which was connected to Internet via The Xchange BBS. For the few months between Barricade opening, and Holus Bolus closing, three of the four anarchist bookshops in Australia had public access, internet-linked computers.

However, although the anarchist communities of Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne all have the possibility of constant cheap communication with each other, this network doesn't seem to be used very much in that way yet. It's early days in the development of such a resource and it obviously takes time for people to find out how they can use it, as they've been so isolated from each other for so long. But i feel sure that if i write a follow-up again in another year, this situation will have changed completely.

Strangely enough, access to this network seems to have developed and improved international links much more rapidly than domestic ones. The most notable example of this is the link between European Counter Network (ECN) in Italy and The Xchange BBS in Melbourne. The Xchange now receives a constant flow of news from the ECN BBS in Padova. The two BBSs also jointly produce a regular English-language electronic newsletter which summarises these postings, along with a full translation of one or two longer documents from Italy's 'self-organised' left.

There have also been links built with La Linea Lliure BBS in Barcelona in Catalunya, Spunk Press - an international collective which maintains an archive of anarchist literature on Internet - and several other anarchist groups and individuals around the world.

At the time of the original article, i'd had no contact with Internet and knew virtually nothing about it. Because of this, i made no mention of it in that article. However, thanks to the guidance of a few anarchist friends who knew more about these things than i did, i quickly came to realise that the job of setting up an anarchist network would be made much easier and cheaper - and more effective - if we used Internet as our means of communication. Since that time too, general public knowledge and use of Internet has grown at a fantastic pace.

The original technology (known as Fidonet Protocol) which we'd envisoned using for the net would have limited us in a lot of ways, due to the fact that it would have been more expensive to operate and we wouldn't have had the instant international access we now have with Internet. However, it would have given us some short term advantages that we didn't get from Internet. Firstly, it would have restricted our internal network communication to other BBSs on our own network, which would probably have meant there would by now be a lot more communication between the australian cities. It would also have meant we could have had closer links with ECN in Italy, as this is the type of network they have. La Linea Lliure in Barcelona also operates this system and ECN in Germany have a similar network.

However, Fido Protocol is not compatible with Internet and i believe that in the long run, all these networks and BBSs will gradually change over to using Internet as their communication medium. The reason for using Internet is that it's become so much cheaper to operate than Fido (which has to be done with long-distance phone calls) and that it gives you access to a vastly wider network and one that's expanding at such a pace that the anarchist movement can't afford not to have a voice there. Internet is undoubtedly going to become one of the most important forms of media within a very short time and i'd say it will eventually overtake television as the main form of mass media in the world. Unlike television, however, we've got a chance to have a significant voice in this medium, but we must get in there now if we're going to get the chance to develop this influence.

I'd like to see more anarchist groups around the world setting up their own network links, as this will certainly help us communicate with each other more easily and effectively. And with better communication, we can only build a bigger and stronger global anarchist movement. The groups with existing network links can provide help and advice for people and collectives who want to set up their own computer systems. I've written a book called: "Message Sticks In Cyberspace - an anarchist guide to computer communication" ("message sticks" are traditional communication mediums used by australian aboriginal people.) This book aims to take people who know virtually nothing about computers and, with simple explanations, get them to the point where they can set up a Bulletin Board and run a network. So far this book is only available from Australia, but hopefully there will soon be copies for sale in Europe.

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WWW: http://www.usyd.edu.au/~cjmount/cat/
Byteback BBS
Email: root@byteback.apana.org.au

En Linea Lliure BBS
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08001 Barcelona
Catalunya
Tel (BBS): ++34-3-3290783
Fax: ++34-3-3290858
Fidonet: 2:343/121.80
Email: joanma <ellokal@pangea.upc.es>
Indian BBS
(Tarragona)
Tel (BBS): ++34-77-550485
Fidonet: 2:343/302.
Email: c/o joanma <ellokal@pangea.upc.es>
ECN Bologna (European Counter Network)
Tel (BBS): 051-520986
Email: fam0393@iperbole.bologna.it
WWW: http://www.xs4all.nl/~tank/ecn/ecnbo.htm
Italian Anarchist Computer Book
Digital Guerrilla – guida all'uso alternativo di computer, modem e reti
telematiche.
100 pages A5 (15 x 21 cm).
10.000 lire (that is, about 6 US $, plus 2 $ for shipping and
handling outside italy)) – in italy you can get it in many squats, social
centres and infoshops. interested people in foreign countries can email
lpaccagn@risc1.gelso.unitn.it
An electronic html version of the book will be available on the internet in a month or so.
Spunk Press
Electronic Anarchist Archive
c/o Box A, Arjuna
12, Mill Road
Cambridge
CB1 2AD
Email: spunk-info-request@lysator.liu.se
WWW:
http://www.cwi.nl/cwi/people/Jack.Jansen/spunk/Spunk_Home.html
Ftp: ftp://etext.archive.umich.edu/pub
/Politics/Spunk/
Message Sticks In Cyberspace
from Black Rose Books
563a King Street
Newtown
N.S.W. 2042
Australia
$10 (australian) including post and package
international money orders only please.
The author of this article
Email: will@desire.apana.org.au

Will Kemp

ANARCHIST HOMELANDS MOVEMENT

We wish to contact people who are interested in setting up a community using Co-operative Anarchist principles. Initially we seek to get in contact with others who are not satisfied with their present lifestyle who wish to work towards finding land with others. This would be a process that might take approximately a year. During this time we might establish what skills and resources each individual can offer. Working groups would need to be established to research each aspect of setting up a community. For example, Building dwellings and communal facilities, energy systems, Water reticulation, roads, legal procedures, gardening, financial security, site planning, land acquisition and any other matters that might arise. Once these matters are resolved a workshop could be held to give everybody an opportunity to meet each other and for working groups to present their plans. Hopefully the question of land acquisition would be resolved at this time. If you are interested in the co-operative principles of anarchy then this is for you. It is important that the issue of land is resolved before the workshop. This way we can keep the energy moving to put our plans becoming a reality. If this happens the whole project will disintegrate. Another problem that could arise is that people who do not agree with the principle's of mutual aid might seek to create conflict to prevent us achieving our goals. For this reason it is important that we are all clear about what our hopes fears and expectations are. Our principles are outlined in the C.L.A.P. pamphlet. Please read this carefully and necessary that if you are wanting to be involved then it is something that will be a totally new way of being. A new beginning, a chance for us to explore the idealistic side of our nature that we suppress in our current lifestyle.

Bret Fisley
c/o PO Uki
2484 NSW
066 797 119

Letter to the Editor of the Anarchist

I am moved to write to your paper upon reading page seven of the last issue. Here you had two "feminist" articles side by side - one advocating abortion be treated as another health service to women and taken out of the criminal code; and the other proclaiming non-violence as a great feminist insight and a means forward for members of society, especially those in a weaker pos-ition, to achieve a more contented political milieu.

The stark contradiction between these points of view struck me.

Anyone I have spoken to on the subject of abortion, from whatever side of the argument, has at least agreed that abortion is a violent act. It is ultimate violence against an unborn child, and it also attacks the woman at that vulnerable and sensitive part of her being: her womb.

Surely a plug for non-violence should include a call for women to reject abortion as a solution to our problems. Pro-life feminists say we need to take a strong, consistent stand against violence. No more war, rape, racism, abortion, capital punishment etc.. As Pauline writes in her article "Violence is not Power" ,"... why do we think violence is inevitable? ...shouldn't we try and eliminate this depressing notion once and for all?"

There isn't any such thing as "necessary violence" is there??

Feminists have always said that a womans' value isn't in just being wanted by a man, but it has been used as the criteria by which an unborn baby should live or die.

It is interesting to note that those who say a foetus has no rights are quick to insist it has a right to be wanted. According to some feminists, a pre-born child only has value if the mother chooses to imbue him or her with it. But this attitude is entirely inconsistent with the feminist principles of valuing human life (whatever sex ,colour, creed, or age); and the rejection of violence as a solution to problems.

We all know that to rid our society of violence will take a fair amount of courage and heroism on the part of many people - are women up to the challenge? I say we are if we stick together and help each other, and stay firm in our commitment to non-violence.

Once we start making exceptions to the "rule" , our principled stance loses its power entirely, and becomes as self-seeking as any other person scratching for power and willing to climb over the bodies of others to get it. As Pauline wrote, "power is collective consent!".

Unborn children are innocent of their conception, no matter what series of events led to it, and certainly are not given a say in the decision making over when and if their lives will end in current pro-choice feminist rhetoric.

Let women agree to take a consistent non-violent stand, welcome children into our midst, and drop abortion rights from our political agenda.

ANNE

IS THE WAR OVER?

Robert Malecki
Bergmastargatan 11B
91531 Robertsfors
Sweden
Tele.Area code 0934/10644

Dear friends,

My name is Robert Malecki and I need your help. I need the help of the members in your organisation. I need the help or all organisations who claim that they stand on the side of poor and working class people. I have been living in exile in Sweden for over 23 years because of my activities during the Vietname war. If I were to return to the United States I could be put in prison for a very long and therefore this plea for help.

Between the years 1968 and 1972 I publicly took responsibility for the destruction of tens of thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands of draftfiles and orders calling young, mostly poor and working class kids up to be sent to Vietnam. Statements to the newspapers, T.V., and radio usually said "that we would not tolerate sending working class kids off to Vietnam to kill other poor and working class kids". I also took responsibility for the destruction of the international computer network of the Dow Chemical Corp. in Washington D.C. This company produced napalm and agent orange for the bombs being dropped on Vietnam. Because of this action and others Dow Chemical stopped its production of napalm. *However we were unable to stop the war.*

Speaking of large corporations who are prepared to commit genocide against innocent people one should mention that this is still going on today. A large mining company called the Conzinc Riotinto with its head office in Australia has been strip mining on the island of Bougainville. The people who inhabit this island are fighting for their independence and have closed the mine. The mining company and the Australian government are financing a dirty little war on Bougainville in order to open up the mine again. One would think that the Australian government had learned its lesson after the Vietnam fiasco! They were allied with the Americans remember. Anyhow all those who read this letter should try and raise this matter in appropriate way. Just as the Vietnamese needed to support back then, the people on the island of Bougainville need support today. Perhaps all of you Vietnam veterans who got tricked into fighting for the profits of Dow Chemical and others in Vietnam could help stick the mining company Conzinco Riotinto and the Australian government and their policies of genocide against the wall. That would really be justice!

In November of 1969 I was caught coming out of a draft board with military files. I was put on trial and sentenced to 12 years in prison. In defence of my actions I took up the Nuremburg trials after the Second World War. I said that there was no difference between the Nazi concentration camps and the American bombings of the Vietnamese people.

Therefore it was my duty to break national laws, in protesting American war making policy in Vietnam, in order to uphold International laws. This defence was not allowed by the court and I was sent to a maximum security prison in Lewisburg, Penn.

At this prison there were many others sitting because of their activities against the United States government. There were black nationalists, black panthers, anti-war activists and even some Russian spies! Jimmy Hoffa, leader of the powerful Teamsters Union was

there and not the least Catholic priests like Phil Berrigan. I sat in prison 27 months. However my activities against the war in Vietnam did not stop there. One of the more spectacular actions was the time a Russian spy, who claimed that his parents had been killed in "Dresden" during the second world war and I purposed publically to be exchanged for two B-52 pilots, alive or dead, because we believed that the Vietnamese struggle for independence was correct.

The United States government had not succeeded in silencing the opposition to its criminal was policies and therefore found new ways to try and keep people in prison. Conspiracy trials, that is you did not have to do anything against the government to be put on trial, merely talking about it was enough. One of the big conspiracy trials of the time was the case against Phil Berrigan and other Catholic priests and nuns who, according to the government, were planning to bomb the White House and attack the B-52 bomber planes stationed in Guam in the Pacific ocean. The key person in this frame up was an agent sent in by the government to the prison we were in to get the goods on people. I could have been a defence witness in this case.

However at the same time as the above was going on I was charged by a "secret grand jury" for conspiracy to bomb public buildings and electric powerplants among other crimes. The funny thing about this is that it never happened! The White House, planes on Guam, electric power plants, public buildings was a conspiracy according to the government. In reality we were people who had always taken public responsibility for our actions.

At the same time that this was going on, Jimmy Hoffa leader of the powerful transport union, received a pardon from Richard Nixon the president. Was Nixon afraid that Hoffa would join an anti-war coalition and bring the working class out against the war? Serious discussions were going on and the possibility was a real threat. I watched Jimmy Hoffa walk out of prison and I believe that his deal with Nixon was a betrayal of poor and working class people. Soon after Jimmy Hoffa disappeared. I wonder who killed him? The government? The Mafia? Hmmm!

After 27 months in prison I was released on bail pending trial for the above 25,000 dollars raised by the anti-war movement gave me the chance to go underground and come to Sweden. I applied for political asylum and received a humanitary asylum mainly because the Social Democratic Party under the leadership of Olaf Palme had gone over to the Vietnamese side after Nixon's massive bombings of Vietnam.

When Bill Clinton became President I wrote him a letter demanding amnesty. I thought that Clinton who had gone to England during the war would understand my situation. Well I waited nearly two years for and answer from Bill Clinton. Now I heard from a friend that McNamara has written a book which has made front page news both in the States and Australia. After all these years he is saying now that he knew that this war was all wrong. This is an act of a political coward, however better late then never. It appears to me that many people now 25 years after the war are creeping out of the closet and saying things about how wrong this war was. Well if these people had any guts they would help people like myself get the right to return home. Right McNamara?

I will never say I am sorry for my actions against the war in Vietnam. Millions of people suffered and are still suffering because of the bombings. Tens of thousands have cancer and children are still being born deformed because of chemicals like agent orange! Besides that it was not I who was the criminal, it was people like Richard Nixon who were responsible for the war.

I have children and grand children in the United States who I would like to visit. I want the right to return to the U.S., the country of my birth and walk the streets as a free man. I mean people like Bill Calley, leader of the My Lai massacre, are walking free today in the U.S. at the same time people like me can not return home I have always taken responsibility for my actions publically in newspapers, T.V., and radio. I do not intend to crawl back to the U.S. begging for forgiveness. However I would accept an amnesty or pardon. The United States government can call it anything they want as long as all the charges against me between the years 1968 and 1973 are dropped.

In closing I would like to say that I need your help just as I need the help of organisations claiming to stand on the side of poor and working class people. Unlike Bill Clinton I could not run off to England during the war in Vietnam. Unlike McNamara I did not creep out from the closet 25 five years later to talk about being against the war! But I still remember the faces of the Vietnamese children running down a highway in Vietnam while Napalm was burning holes in their little bodies and I did fight the best way I knew how!

Please publish this letter. Send this letter to other people, other organisations, other countries. Send a letter to the White House. Send a letter to me. But please help. Don't forget the dirty little war going on today in Bougainville mentioned in this letter. Especially you Vietnam veterans now you have a real chance to get those corporate creeps responsible for sending you off to die for their profits! This mining company, Conzinc Riotinto, with offices in Australia and London are carrying out a genocidal war TODAY!!! along with the Australian government. The people on Bougainville need your help! Put these creeps asses against the wall!

Demand the U.S. government take up this matter. Demand that the charges against me be dropped. Demand the right for me to return to the U.S.

Ask Bill Clinton if he enjoyed Nixon's funeral? Tell McNamara if he had any guts he would fight for people like myself. We didn't hide in the closet.

I am feeling like the Japanese soldier who was found on a deserted island in the Pacific Ocean 25 years after the Second World War. His first question was "Is the war over?".

REPORT FROM CHIAPAS

From will@byteback.dircon.co.uk Mon Aug 21 00:10:17 1995
Date: Fri, 18 Aug 95 10:44:09 BST
From: will <will@byteback.dircon.co.uk>
To: theanarc@byteback.apana.org.au
Subject: report from chiapas

At the beginning of January, 1994, a new chapter began in the five hundred years long struggle of Mexico's indigenous people against colonisation. Under more and more pressure - now mainly from U.S. imperialism - the indigenous Zapatista National Liberation Army EZLN) rose up and successfully created an autonomous zone in the Lacondon Forest in the Mexican state of Chiapas. This zone covered a large number of indigenous villages in what is one of the last remnants of forest left in Mexico. (Like everywhere else in the world, the imperialist agenda of total environmental destruction is nearing completion here.)

This autonomous zone existed and flourished all through 1994, giving everyone living there equal control over the running of their communities. But in February 1995, under extremely powerful economic and political pressure from the U.S. government, the Mexican army was sent in to destroy it. Realising that the high price of defending the zone would be paid for in indigenous blood, which has been considered cheap for far too long, the EZLN decided against a fight.

The Mexican army took control of the area, using standard and well-tested colonial techniques. With beatings, rape, torture and murder, they drove the indigenes out of their villages and forced them to seek refuge deeper in the forest. Then they completely destroyed all the villages and poisoned the water supplies to prevent them from returning. They also set up their own camps and occupied the area themselves.

In April, May and again in June, the government and delegates from the EZLN held peace talks, which they call "dialogues", in the Tzeltal indian village of San Andres Larrainzar (or San Andres Sacamch'en), which is near San Cristobal de las Casas, a small city over 2000 metres up in the Chiapas altiplano. A fourth dialogue there is scheduled for the 4th of July.

These dialogues are a complete farce, with the government deliberately setting out to confuse the Zapatistas, whose first languages are the local indigenous ones, rather than Spanish and to buy time in which to increase the pressure on their communities. But the EZLN has no choice except to try and get some positive results from them. Their communities want them to talk. They don't want the war which seems to be the only alternative. And whether or not they really have any faith in a government which is just another force of colonialism in a five hundred year long history of European colonisation, they seem to see it as the only solution.

There might be better prospects for a positive outcome if it wasn't for the U.S. government, like a hungry wolf panting at the border, waiting for an opportunity to march in and exert military control in addition to the economic power they already have. It's only 150 years since the U.S. forcibly took over half of Mexico and incorporated it into their country, and of course they're not happy with just half, they want the whole bloody lot!

The dialogue in San Andres Sacamch'en over the weekend of the 12th to the 6th of May was a very strange event. It struck me as being something that could probably only happen in Mexico. The talks took place in a group of buildings on one side of the Zocalo, which is the square in the centre of Mexican towns, including one building specially built for the purpose on what used to be a basketball court. Around this block, there were four cordons - the inside one made up of Red Cross volunteers, the second of local indigenous people, the third of other concerned members of the Mexican public and the fourth cordon, on the outside, was of military police, armed only with batons.

The Red Cross were there as an internationally recognised body, supposedly impartial, hoping to prevent any violent clashes between the two sides. The indigenous and other Mexicans, making up what's known as the "Cinturon de Paz", or "peace cordon", were there to make sure the government forces didn't try any dirty tricks with the EZLN delegates. And the army was there to protect the government representatives and show that the government was in control of the situation. The whole thing created a very weird atmosphere in the town.

I was one of a group of twenty or so international observers, who were there to keep a less easily silenced eye on the conduct of the government and the army.

Around sunset on the first day, the EZLN delegates arrived, in two groups of three and one group of two, in three separate convoys of cars with red cross and civilians accompanying them to ensure their safety. The first three were dressed entirely in black, with black balaclavas covering their whole face except for their eyes. In a bizarre contrast, they were wearing a local style of brightly coloured hats which have multicoloured streamers hanging from the brims. They were greeted by loud cheering and clapping as they drove through they cordons and got out of their car.

The second group arrived in the same manner. They were dressed similarly, except they weren't wearing the coloured hats. The last convoy to arrive came after dark and included the only woman in the group, Comandanta Trinidad, known as "Trini". She was the only one dressed in normal clothes, although she had a scarf over her nose and the lower part of her face, to disguise her features.

It was a strange, but moving spectacle, watching the arrival of these freedom fighters who have risked their lives - and even right there and then were putting themselves at risk - to fight for land rights and equality and against colonialism and genocide. At this point in history, these people and the rest of their communities are involved in what's probably the most important struggle for land rights in terms of global politics. In fact it's possibly one of the most politically important things happening in the world today, although it's being heavily suppressed in the international media. If the indigenous peoples of Chiapas win this struggle, it can't fail to have a serious beneficial effect on land rights campaigns and fights for indigenous survival elsewhere in North America and all round the world. Which of course is why the U.S. government and multinational companies are leaning so heavily on the Mexican government.

The dialogue went on from the Friday evening to late on Monday night, with the cordons maintained continuously, in shifts for the whole time. They gave the whole thing an atmosphere of a vigil, with maybe more spiritual significance than political, encircling the block motionless and silent, in the hot sun of the afternoon and the cold mountain darkness of the night.

In the early afternoon and late evening every day, somebody would come out of the talks and give a report to the press, who were assembled on a large, covered, stage-like structure in front of the main building. The afternoon report was always made by someone from the government team and invariably consisted of rambling, jargon-infested, anonymous nonsense, which said absolutely nothing at all. This was repeated in the evenings too, but also at that time there would be statements from some of the EZLN delegates, masked up as usual and dressed in black. These were invariably clear, easy to follow and personally expressive accounts of what was happening in the dialogue - which was basically a frustrating, confusing runaround, with the government totally uninterested in making any concessions at all.

The pressures of tiredness and the strain of having to try and deal with the nonsensical talking-machines representing the government eventually became too much for the EZLN delegates and on Sunday evening they stopped listening and left the conference room. At this point, the government ordered in two more battalions of armed soldiers who completely surrounded the village - presumably with the intention of arresting or killing the Zapatistas on the pretext that the talks had broken down. The soldiers in the cordon around the talks moved away and gathered in large groups and the Red Cross abandoned their cordon to congregate at the doors of the buildings. All the indigenous people mobilised and grouped up and the stage was set for what could easily have been the spark that would ignite a civil war in Mexico.

However, the intermediaries in the talks managed to smooth things over and get the two sides talking again and nothing came of it in the end. But it had come very close that night, to a situation the U.S. government is undoubtedly hoping will go all the way very soon.

The dialogue ended very late the next night and all the outsiders and foreigners on the peace cordon were taken in, in small groups, for a quick meeting with the Zapatistas. We moved quickly among them, shaking hands and mumbling inconsequential words of support and then left them to get ready for the long trips back to their comrades and communities in the Lacondon forest.

There were no agreements reached, partly because the EZLN delegates have no power to agree to anything without a mandate from their communities. But there were a couple of small points for them to take back for discussion before the next dialogue.

This took place on the 7th of June and was very much the same as the one before. There was one addition to the EZLN team - another woman, Commandanta Andrea, who arrived dressed in black clothes and a black balaclava. Apart from this, there seemed to be no significant differences and no real advance in negotiations. At this point, it's beginning to look like an endless series of dialogues stretching well into the future. However, something's going to have to change sooner or later. It's just a case of which side takes the initiative and when.

Meanwhile, the work of rebuilding the indigenous communities destroyed by the army in February is well under way. Made possible by the organisation of encampments of foreigners and civilian Mexicans who are keeping an eye on the army, all but one of the villages have been reoccupied. However it's a massive task to recover from the damage done. Rebuilding houses, planting crops and finding ways around the problem of poisoned water supplies is enough in itself, but the biggest problem is that they haven't got any food. Because they were driven out of the villages, they've been unable to plant crops and therefore there's no harvest to live off. There's a disastrous level of malnutrition, with a lot of the children showing bloated bellies as a result.

However, from what I've heard these problems are being overcome somehow and the villages are being rebuilt, still along the political lines of the old autonomous zone. There is hope, but there's a great need for outside help. Support, both personally and financially from independent overseas sympathisers will play an important part in helping the indigenous people of Chiapas overcome the latest in a long series of imperialist attacks.

Anyone who is going to Mexico and wants to get information on the current situation and ways to help should go to:

Centro Fray Bartolome de Derechos Humanos,
Avenida 5 de Febrero,
San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas.

If you want to go to a forest encampment, you'll have to be able to speak reasonably good Spanish.

This report is my impression of the situation here in Chiapas. I've only been in Mexico six weeks and it's possible i've misinterpreted some aspects of the way things are. However it's entirely a personal view and I make no claim to being impartial.

Will Kemp, Chiapas, Mexico, June 1995.

CAPTAIN ZIGZAG AND THE GREENS

On a recent visit to West End I did my best to ignore the State election. I have the usual level of cynicism about both sides of politics and-heh-I live in Melbourne now and this was a holiday. My attention was quickly focused, however, when the spokesperson for the Queensland Greens, Drew Hutton, announced that the Green Party would give its preferences to the Right.

When I first became involved in politics about a decade ago, my interest centred on two kinds of activity. I was also involved with Drew and others in an early attempt to form a Green Party in Brisbane. I was also involved in the Queensland Coalition for Democratic Rights which formed to fight the latest round of regressive measures enacted by the National Party government.

If my memory serves correctly some of the choicer moments of that particular year included the sacking of hundreds of electricity workers, the introduction of draconian sentences for kids smoking pot, the introduction of laws making it illegal for gays to be served in hotels, raids on the abortion clinics at Greenslopes, over 100 people arrested in one afternoon protesting outside Parliament.

There may have been other highlights. I do also recall that this was about the time Bjelke Petersen got himself presented with an honorary doctorate at Queensland University.

All of this races through my mind as I watch Drew tell us that the Nationals are different now. I hardly recognise him in his new role as their apologist. Am I really to believe that the party that brought all this in just one of its 20+ years of government now deserves support? Are the Nationals much more gentler and sophisticated now than in the irrelevant past? Could I be that out of touch with Queensland politics?

If I am that out of touch perhaps I can talk about where I do live at the moment. Let me remind you of what living under a tory state government is like. Of course the conservatives in Victoria are also a sophisticated bunch - no red necks allowed through the doors of the Melbourne Club. This unfortunately hasn't the slightest bearing on the Right's political agenda which over the last decade has been to rip up the social contract regarding the provision of health services, education, housing, employment practices and so on. Since the election of the Kennett government in Victoria we have seen the sackings of thousands of State Public Servants, the scrapping of the State Award System, the closure of over a hundred secondary schools, the closure of health services, the wholesale privatisation of the public utilities, the suspension of all local government, the development of a monstrous new freeway system and a corresponding degradation of the public transport system.

There is a litany of outrageous attacks and scandals to rival anything during the worst years of the National Party government in Queensland. Particular highlights include the attempt to close the only co-educational facility in Richmond where school defenders were bludgeoned with batons by the Victorian Police. There was the punitive and malicious legal campaign through successive courts to close down Northlands Secondary College.

There was the forced resignation of the Director of Public Prosecutions because of political interference. There is the ongoing demolition of extensive parklands at Albert Park to build the Grand Prix. The inevitable protest that all this led to has prompted the police to train in military style crowd-control techniques involving baton charges, capsicum sprays, and new holds that threaten to cut blood circulation to the brain.

It is probably not necessary to tell readers of Neighbourhood News that political vision should extend beyond the myopia of the current political parties. Most of the established parties have opted for a cynical crisis management whose vision of the future does not extend beyond the next election. The Goss government is a case in point. The Greens used to see themselves as offering an alternative to the conventional parties. Indeed, they saw themselves as the parliamentary wing of a broader movement for far-reaching social change. It is now clear, however, that they have become as grubby as any political party trying to maximise their own position even at the cost of principle. By abandoning themselves to conventional party politics the Greens find themselves giving their preferences to the party whose record for vicious and inhuman attacks on the lives of ordinary people stands for all to see.

For me, any socialist or green political practice worth its name would have to heed Noam Chomsky's recent emphasis on both broader long term visions and more immediate goals. We don't abandon our vision of how we want society to provide for the maintence of life, to carry out decision making, to nurture and utilise the talents and contributions of all. We also don't neglect to fight for and defend those real improvements that make a difference to people's lives today. It is difficult to hold both ends of this particular rope. The Greens at one time seemed to offer the chance to do this. Instead, they have not only ditched any broader vision for social change but have also disregarded the necessity to stop the Right from destroying those gains which working people have fought long and hard for. In their grab at parliamentary power they have joined those whose cynical realism means cancelled futures.

Faced with a set of very poor choices once every three years I usually reckon that the inadequate labourism of the ALP is a lesser evil when compared to the Right. Attacks by the conservative forces in this country have very concrete and even devastating effects - as I have learnt once again with the advent of the Kennett government - the difference of degree between the political parties do, at this level, matter.

The British socialist Raymond Williams said that when faced with a lack of alternatives he approached the Labour Party with the attitude of something like: vote for them on Saturday, fight them on Monday. It is a sad reflection on the Greens that they no longer even promise to supplant the ALP as the lesser evil.

Fortunately in places like Queensland and Victoria there are people working in environmental, social, local community and work place groups and coalitions whose political practice embodies a vision beyond that dictated by the Nationals, the ALP or the Greens.

Gary Pierce

(reprinted from the West End Neighbourhood News)

QLD ELECTION RESULTS HIGHLIGHT LIMITATIONS OF PARLIAMENTARY RULE

As the scrutineers fight amongst each other, trying to get their boy or girl over the line, it's blatantly obvious to anyone with half a brain that parliamentary elections are a ridiculous mechanism by which to decide how decisions are made in any society. Whether Labor or the National/Liberal party rule in Queensland over the next three years will be decided by a few hundred voters. 49.9% of the electorate will be disenfranchised for the next three years because a few hundred people voted one way instead of another way. What a ridiculous and pathetic state of affairs!

Parliamentary elections and parliamentary rule are based on the winner take all philosophy. Who ever wins the election will have a mandate to do whatever they like in parliament over the next three years because they received a few hundred more votes than any other political party. What a joke!! These clowns and the media hacks who follow these clowns forget that the major decisions on which direction society moves in are not made in parliament (both Federal and State) but they are made in the boardrooms of national and transnational corporations. Parliamentary elections are nothing more than two minutes of illusory power. Why should we vote people into power to make decisions for us over the next three years? Why give a group of people a blank cheque to do whatever they like? Wouldn't it be more sensible, efficient and productive to actually get involved in the decision making process? Why should we give this responsibility to a group of people who will then decide to do whatever they like?

The closeness of the Queensland election highlights the fact that a few hundred votes can be used to determine what happens in your State for the next 3-4 years. It's not adequate to vote for and give politicians power to make decisions for us. If we don't want the same farce to happen over and over again we should be thinking and trying to implement other ways of making decisions. The Queensland election highlights the stupidity of representative democracy. Why should we give power to elected representatives to make decisions for us? It would be much fairer and more efficient to have a political process in place which gives people the right to make decisions, not elect people to make decisions for them.

Direct democracy, where the people involved in a decision make the decision, would overcome many of the shortcomings of parliamentary rule. Such a system of self rule would allow people to work within self-defined regions and would see the abolition of both the State apparatus and eventually the nation State. Self-managed regions would federate and would not only be responsible for day to day decisions but would own and manage the means of production, distribution and exchange. Self-management only occurs when people have both economic and decision making power. As we approach the 21st century it's time we buried such inefficient concepts as parliamentary rule and looked at and agitated for other ways of running our lives and controlling our environment. The recent Queensland election highlights the necessity for the creation of a direct democratic movement.

Reprinted from the Anarchist Age

ODE TO ANARCHOCOLONIALISM

You out there with your colonial attitudes, fuck off. You Anarchist, who think you have no residues from oppressive cultural myths, I have news for you. A good grasp of theory means shit when you don't act on it. You colonial Anarchist, you are my enemy, not my comrade. You, you look perplexed, am I talking to you? Yes I probably am. I ask you honestly, do you live in the shadow of another continent, do you dream of Spain 36 or modern Europe? Do you curse Australia for not being like Europe. Do you bore people endlessly at parties as you lament the fact that we don't have weekly riots. Is that how you measure success, by some European model. Do you ever ask yourself what this really means and what makes Australia and Europe so different? Do you understand that in Europe to drive for one thousand kilometres you drive through two countries, a swag of cities and a shit load of people? In Australia you go from one big city to the next, pass through a shit load of deserted roadhouses and fast food outlets. MacDonalds may poison you but a Big Mac won't break a cop car window.

I ask you with your sycophantic European attitudes, how many of your glowing European revolutionaries would drive one thousand, two thousand, three thousand kilometres for a demo? Have you been to AIDEX or Nurrungar where activists from all over the country gathered to run rings around the filth? Would your European Idols do that when they only have to travel for a hundred kilometres to find safe houses, safe people and a demo?

Do you dwell in some retrograde politic, immersed in some 1840's analysis? Is Spain 1936 some shining light, an advertised ideal as insipid as a forestry commission ad. Do you dismiss all political actions where "lifestylers" are present as meaningless because no-one in Spain in 36 had coloured hair and Bakunin sure as shit didn't pierce his nose? Do you know we're in the 1990's or have you spent so long arguing about European political history with the boys that you forgot that things have changed and we need some new insights as the old ones stink like the rotting corpses of all those old bearded men who you, ANARCHIST?, have elevated to the status of GODS? You are too busy wearing your token rhetoric of acceptance to realise you've just created another white male heterosexual paradigm and your world looks just like the one you're claiming to be destroying. And you, lifestyler, do you condemn those who don't dress in your uniform of difference as being "straight", do you know your hero terrorists wear three piece suits?

But back to Europe and those scenarios you wank over as you scan your class war video in the dead of night while crying tears of despair because you haven't seen your politics on video yet and you feel those grey hairs creeping up. You who desire Australia to be just like Europe and curse because it's not.

If you want to emulate you must replicate. You want suburban sprawl from Cairns to Melbourne, the east coast one gigantic Gold Coast with cars, cities, people, rivers swollen black; putrid with rotting fish and car bodies, the sea a toxic dumping ground where ships gather like seagulls, waiting for trees and soil to fill their cavernous stomachs? Is that your Ideal? For that's how we'll get your European riot scenarios, that's how we'll stop your stupid colonial despair. If that's what you aspire to, ANARCHIST, I say go and join the developers, the multinationals, the government, for that's their dream too. So go and fuck with them for they are your comrades and I am not. You are my enemy and I will shoot you dead for I will not destroy this country to pacify your European ideals and I don't need to hear your COLONIALISM MASQUERADING AS ANARCHISM.

I wrote this as a "critique" of anarchism in Australia as I perceive it in some instances. It has been germinating for some years but the Sydney Anarchist conference forced it out of me.

Peace, love and Molatovs,

Hans.travis@xchange.apana.org.au

THREE ARRESTED AT CANUNGRA

Kangaroo 95 is the largest joint and combined military exercise ever to be held in Australia, costing over $64 million. It runs from August 1st - 25th over a huge area of operations - from Derby in the West, through Tenant Creek to Cairns in the East, all land north of that line, the Australian zone and some international waters. It involves 15,750 personnel from the Australian Defence Forces and 2,540 overseas personnel. 500 Indonesian troops are participating.

It is an historical irony that Australian troops will be training the butchers of Timor on the 50th anniversary of the end of World War 2. Over 40,000 East Timorese were killed in the war due to their support of Australian commandos operating against Japanese forces. As the Australian forces pulled out they did a leaflet drop to the Timorese promising "We will never forget you!" In this year of "Australia Remembers" military media hype this slogan has a cruel ring indeed.

The Suharto regime killed over 1 million Indonesians as it came to power in the 1960's. Over the past twenty years it has killed over 200,000 Timorese in its genocide annexation. In October 1975, a month preceeding the invasion, five Australian journalists were tortured and killed by a raiding party of Indonesian troops.

On the eve of the Kangaroo '95 exercises over 80 members of the exiled Timorese, Catholic Worker and West End communities made their way to Canungra Land Warfare Centre in south east Queensland. The group marched on the base, held a liturgy where a coffin of "Australian governmental betrayal and broken promises" was filled with momentos. Shirley Shackelton spoke of her husband's death at the hands of Suharto's troops, Barb Crossing told of how the lives of her father, uncle and guardian were saved by the courage of the Timorese people during WW2, the presence of the Timorese spoke powerfully to exile, genocide and defiant survival. Those gathered planted crosses with the names of Timorese dead at the entrance to the base. Sr. Kay McPadden, Damian le Goullon and Lisa Bridle (with 6 month old son Sean Patrick) then carried the coffin onto the base heading for the School of Military Intelligence.

SHIRLEY SHACKELTON, WHOSE JOURNALIST HUSBAND WAS KILLED 0N TIMOR IN 1975 BY INDONESIAN TROOPS, SPEAKS OUT AT CANUNGRA

Kay, Damian and Lisa were arrested and charged with "trespassing" and "refusing to leave Commonwealth property". They will appear for hearing in the Beaudesert Magistrates Court on September 7.

For more info phone 07 3846 2123.

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